



Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Joint statement on escalating violence in Aleppo, Syria

Statement is attributable to Yacoub El Hillo, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Syria and Kevin Kennedy, Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria Crisis

Damascus/Amman, 13 July 2016-- The United Nations is deeply alarmed by the escalating violence in and around Aleppo city putting hundreds of thousands of people at risk of death and injury. Since 7 July, heavy clashes between the Government of Syria forces and non-state armed groups have rendered the Castello road, the last remaining access road in and out of eastern Aleppo city, impassable. Government and Kurdish forces have since then reportedly gained control of the majority of Castello road, cutting off humanitarian, commercial and civilian movement in and out of eastern Aleppo city, and putting an estimated 200,000-300,000 people closer to the line of fire and at risk of besiegement.

Even before the recent escalation of violence, 10,000 to 30,000 people fled the area between January and June 2016 due to increased airstrikes and insecurity. While it is difficult to collect information on eastern Aleppo due to access restrictions, it is among the areas hardest hit by conflict with most people heavily dependent on humanitarian assistance. Government forces also reportedly intensified airstrikes on areas in rural Aleppo, killing at least 19 people in the town of Ibeen and seven people in the town of Shantra on 10 July.

Furthermore, hundreds of mortars and projectiles were launched on western Aleppo in the past week. From 8 to 11 July, 57 people were reportedly killed including 15 children and 497 were injured. Explosive anti-aircraft projectiles straying into several neighborhoods continue to pose a threat to civilians.

Humanitarian needs must be immediately addressed, including through re-establishing medical evacuations from east Aleppo. The UN and partners in east Aleppo have enough food supplies for 145,000 people for one month, and are urgently working on a response to meet increasing needs.

The UN deplores the spread of hostilities throughout Aleppo and call on all parties to the conflict to end indiscriminate attack on civilians and to fully respect international humanitarian law. The UN further calls on all parties to allow the delivery of humanitarian assistance, as required under Security Council Resolutions 2139, 2165, 2191, and 2258, as well enable the rapid, safe and unhindered evacuation of civilians who wish to leave.

The UN continues to call for unconditional, unimpeded and sustained access to the 5.47 million Syrian men, women and children in hard-to-reach locations, including close to 600,000 in 18 besieged locations.

For further information, please contact:

Linda Tom, Damascus, toml@un.org, Tel: +963 958 880 095

Iyad Nasr, Cairo, nasri@un.org, Tel: +201095558662

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